

## APRIL 26: GURUDATTA VIDYARTHI JAYANTI



Gurudatta Vidyarthi (1864-1890) is one of the finest persons inspired by the life and teachings of Maharshi Dayananda. His quest for spiritual light seemed to come from the soul. The dying scene of Swami Dayanand had a deep impact on this brilliant young scholar. In that last look, he realized that the Rishi (seer) was stepping into eternal bliss after his striving to lead the world to realize that akin to the railway line, human life has mundane and spiritual life as parallel tracks. He picked up the untold appeal from the Rishi to carry the torch further. His erudition, writings, discourses, love for truth, as well as disinterest in glory, comfort and worldly stuff proved his mettle as a strong promoter of the Vedic philosophy.

His death, in the prime of youth, was a loss not only to the Arya Samaj but to the whole world. His scholarly philosophic insights would have shed further light on metaphysics in Sanatan Dharma. Metaphysics is the most abstruse of sciences, unfolding what cannot be reached through objective studies of material reality, namely - the fundamental nature of the world and what it means as humans to inhabit it, the principles of things, concepts such as being, knowing, substance, cause, identity, time, and space.

His ancestors had distinguished themselves in the field both, of letters and arms. He had the aptitude to achieve mastery only with little training. After his study of basic Sanskrit he laid hands on the Rig Vedadi Bhashya Bhumika of Swami Dayananda. He had challenged the Arya Samaj in Multan to arrange for his study of the Astadhyayi, else he would consider its philosophy as trash though deep-seated in his heart was a firm conviction on the intellectual and spiritual worth of the Vedas. His tutor found it beyond his faculties to satiate the quest of Guru Datta.

At the age of 19, Lahore Arya Samaj deputed him to Ajmer to tend to ailing Swami Dayanand. His last look at the Swami was a subtle nonverbal connection between a master and his apprentice that stripped him of his impatience, skepticism and imbibed into him solemnity, firmness, the sense of purpose and strength of character.

After completing a Master's degree in Physical Science he served as acting Professor with exceptional teaching prowess. He joined Lala Hans Raj in establishing the DAV College. His "Terminology of the Vedas" was included in the Sanskrit syllabus of Oxford University. In spite of his erudition in Sanskrit and Vedic philosophy, he remained the humble "Vidyarthi" (student).

He succumbed to tuberculosis. Guru Datta at the point of dying, it is reported that Pt. Guru Datta had told someone who was looking for his manuscript of his biography of swami Dayanand:

*"I have been trying to conscientiously record the life account of my Rishi, not on paper, not in ink, but in my own day-to-day life. It was my ambition to live in Dayanand. Alas! My body has failed me. I lay it down, gladly in the hope that the next vehicle would be more in conformity with the aspirations of the soul."*

Source: "A biographical Sketch of Pandit Guru Datta" by Pt. Chamupati Ji

**(Abridged by Acharya Bramdeo Mokoonlall)**

Note from the contributor of this article:

**We, in the Arya Samaj, need to rise above the slogan "Maharshi Dayanand Ji ki Jai", the symbolic affixing of pictures in Arya Samaj Mandirs and emulate Pt. Guru Datta Vidyarthi by "living life conscientiously ...recording the teachings of the great Rishi, not on paper, not in ink, but in my own day-to-day life."**